

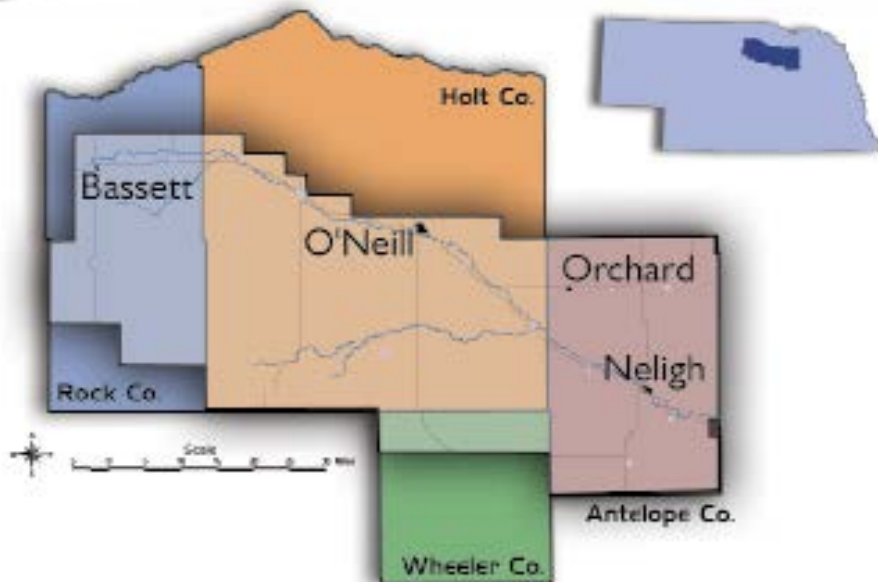
KNOW YOUR NRD



UPPER ELKHORN
Natural Resources District
O'Neill, NE

Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Making the Good Life Better Since 1972

Summer 2013



UPPER ELKHORN NRD

UENRD QUICK FACTS:

- UENRD encompasses 3,052 sq miles or 1,953,280 acres
- Niobrara River Basin Designation 233 square miles
- Lower Platte River Basin Designation 2803 sq miles
- District Population - 17,935
- 7415 Registered Wells of which 4497 are for Irrigation
- Collect Data from approximately 600 Irrigation & Monitoring Wells
- Certified over 1,600 Producers in Nitrogen Management
- Maintain a District wide Groundwater Management Area
- Distributed Cost Share to local Co-operators for Conservation Practices throughout the District

Protecting Lives

Protecting Property

Protecting the Future

Groundwater Irrigated Acre Certification Continues.....

The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues certifying groundwater irrigated acres. Acre certification is based off of 2010 County Assessor data. Landowners who paid irrigated tax during 2010 will receive a certification letter for each parcel listed as irrigated. Once the landowner receives their letter they will need to compile documentation showing the amount of irrigated acres for that legal. Documentation should either be in the form of a FSA form 578 or county assessor tax records. Due to the three different designated areas within the Upper Elkhorn NRD, landowners will be instructed in their certification letter as to which years their documentation should include.

Historically irrigated acres currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Environmental Quality

Incentive Program or other federal, state or local conservation program or irrigated prior to the basin designations must also be certified if there is any possibility of future irrigation. Acres that were historically irrigated in the Lower Niobrara River Basin prior to 2003, Lower Platte River Basin prior to 2004 and previously undesignated area of Holt and Northern Antelope Counties prior to 2008 and have proper documentation may receive 95% certification for the total amount of irrigated acres, should the landowner decide to reactivate a field for irrigation purposes. Any irrigated acres that are not certified prior to the certification deadline will not be allowed to have groundwater applied to them for any purpose.

All information regarding groundwater acre certification, groundwater acre expansion or groundwater acre transfers can be found on the UENRD website at www.uenrd.org

2013 Expansion of Groundwater Irrigated Acres Cancelled!

The Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors have voted to cancel the October 2013 Expansion of New Groundwater Irrigated Acres Sign-up. By a vote of 9-4, the UENRD Board has canceled new groundwater irrigated acre expansion planned for the 2014 growing season. This was not an easy decision. Due to the decline in groundwater levels across the district; a lack of recharge; and, the looming drought conditions, some felt giving the water table a chance to recharge would be in the best interest of our water resources.

Bazile Groundwater Management Area Proposed

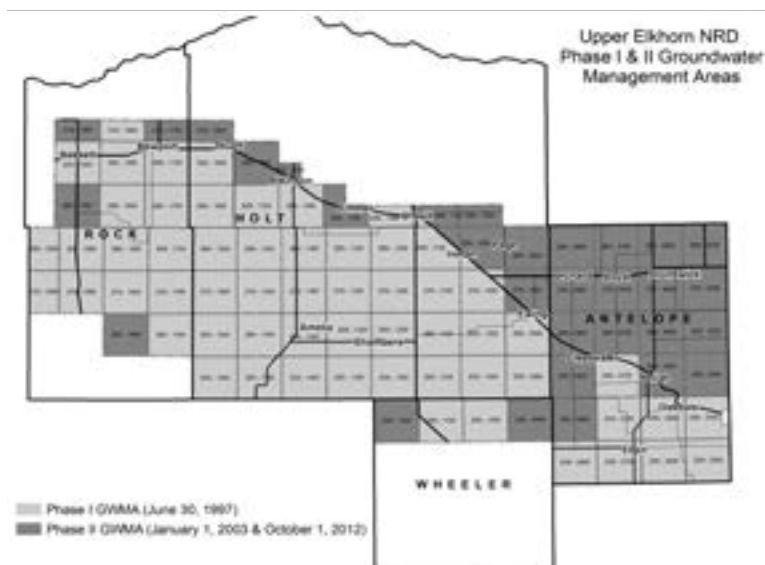
The Upper Elkhorn, Lower Elkhorn, Lewis and Clark and Lower Niobrara NRDs held a public meeting on March 27 to review the Bazile Groundwater Management Area (BGMA) draft plan. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting to learn more about the plan which addresses the high nitrate issue within the watershed. Groundwater Management Plans have been implemented in each of the cooperating NRDs but improvements have not been observed as quickly as desired. Each of the NRDs has declared the entire district a Phase



I groundwater management area which would include the BGMA. Phase II areas in the BGMA are located in the Lower Elkhorn NRD, Upper Elkhorn NRD and Phase III areas in the Lewis and Clark NRD. Within each of the NRD's Groundwater Management Plans the requirements increase as the phase increases and higher phases tend to include more regulations. Long term and short term project goals and objectives have been developed by an advisory council with assistance from a group of technical advisors. The water quality goals and objectives are based on being able to meet the drinking water maximum contaminant level of 10 mg/l for nitrate and achieving a reduction in the NRDs groundwater management phase triggers. The NRDs and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality will continue to work on the plan until it is approved and implemented.

UENRD Expands Phase II Groundwater Management Area

Due to rising levels of nitrate-nitrogen in the irrigation water samples collected by the UENRD, the Board of Directors have voted to expand the Phase II Groundwater Quality Management Areas throughout the district. As of October 1, 2012, anyone farming within a Phase II area will now be required to accomplish a deep soil analysis for nitrate-nitrogen on each field larger than 40 acres with more than 50 pounds of actual nitrogen fertilizer applied; and, submit a Phase II report to the Upper Elkhorn NRD by December 31 of each year as well as continuing Phase I activities. A complete copy of the UENRD Groundwater Management Plan Rules & Regulations as well as the list of Groundwater Quality Management Area controls is available on the NRD website at www.uenrd.org.



- Protecting Your Health through Water Quality
- Protecting Your Taxes through Local Control
- Protecting Our Natural Resources for Future Generations

Created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1969 with the passage of LB 1356, Nebraska's NRDs began operating on July 1, 1972. NRDs were formed using Nebraska's 13 major river basins to offer local solutions to local problems. Locally elected officials establish District policies to address the needs of our specific area. This unique form of local government assures that the concerns of the upper reaches of the Elkhorn River Basin are addressed by the people being affected. Locally led conservation for your future.

The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues to maintain a responsible budget to lessen the property tax burdens of its friends and neighbors. This has been accomplished by obtaining additional funding through the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Dept of Environmental Quality 319 Grants. The FY 12-13 budget request is only 2.21 cents per \$100 of valuation and a total of \$619,636 in property tax asking.

The Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors meet on the 4th Monday of every month at the Upper Elkhorn NRD Office in O'Neill, un-less otherwise noted in the public notice. Everyone is welcome to attend and share their thoughts or concerns for our natural resources.